TOM BRADY HAS NEW NFL HOME WITH TAMPA BAY »17A

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

THE DENVER POST

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Colorado has 2nd death

By Sam Tabachnik
The Denver Post

Colorado health officials announced Tuesday that a second person in the state has died of the novel coronavirus, while nearly two dozen additional positive cases show the outbreak continues to spread to all corners of the state.

Meanwhile, a long-term health care facility in Loveland reported a resident in her 90s and a staffer in her 20s tested positive for COVID-19 — the respiratory illness caused by the new virus, which is far more dangerous to older populations — as health officials work to contain the spread of the illness in a building full of at-risk adults over 60.

The virus has also affected U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner and U.S. Rep. Jason Crow, who both announced Tuesday that they're self-quarantining after coming into contact last week with a constituent who subsequently was found to have the coronavirus.

State health officials announced 23 new confirmed cases Tuesday, pushing to 183 the

VIRUS » 20A

MASKS. Nonprofit donates nearly 4,600 masks. »2A
RESTAURANTS. Hundreds of employees laid off. »4A
GUNS. Sales of weapons and ammunition soar. »6A
ICE. Arrests continue. »9A
POLIS. Governor draws praise for his response. »10A
VENTILATORS. Hospitals worry about a shortage. »20A

WEST METRO TAKES VIRUS PRECAUTIONS

West Metro firefighter and paramedic Scott Martin puts on his personal protective equipment, or PPE, as he heads out Tuesday for a call on Medic 1 at West Metro Fire Rescue Station One in Lakewood. Because 70% of calls in its district are medical calls, the fire department has decided to have every firefighter wear hazmat-style protective suits to protect them from getting the COVID-19 disease while responding to medical calls.

» STORY, 8A *Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post*

Jobless claims in state explode

As layoffs surge amid outbreak, thousands now seek assistance

By Joe Rubino
The Denver Post

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment has seen a massive spike in new unemployment insurance claims as the spread of the new coronavirus and drastic measures being taken to curtail its spread make their impacts felt on businesses in the state.

On Tuesday there were more 6,800 "attempts to file" for unemployment insurance through the state's system before it was shut down for maintenance at 4:30 p.m., according to Cher Haavind, spokeswoman for the labor department. That followed 3,900 claims being filed Monday.

A week prior, on March 9, just 400 people filed, 1,600% fewer than did so Tuesday morning, according to state officials.

"We're seeing one-day or likely one-week and two-week spikes like we never saw in the Great Recession," Jeff Fitzgerald, the state's unemployment insurance director, said in a video news conference Tuesday afternoon.

The full effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Colorado's unemployment rate, which has been

CLAIMS » 16A

FRUSTRATION MOUNTS

Coloradans struggle to get tested, wait days for results

By Jessica Seaman
The Denver Post

Colorado health officials have repeatedly stressed the need to ramp up testing as part of their fight to curtail the swift spread of the new coronavirus. But now, almost two weeks after its presence was confirmed here, the reach of COVID-19 has eclipsed Colorado's ability to test for it.

Residents with symptoms report delays in getting test results or say they are unable to get checked for COVID-19, the highly infectious disease caused by the new coronavirus, unless they are among those most at risk for complications.

The state lab, which once had a turnaround of 24 hours, now takes up to five days to get results because of the high volume of samples it's processing. While the state opened up testing to private companies last week, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is still mostly relying on results from its lab. And it's unclear how many patient samples the state's health systems have sent to private labs.

Colorado is now seeking more testing kits from the federal government, as state and private labs across the nation raise concerns about a potential shortage in testing supplies, from special swabs

TESTING » 15A

The Post's regular sports section has been suspended

Dear readers:

There have been so many cancellations due to the coronavirus, trying to fill an entire sports section is virtually impossible. As a result, we have scaled back our sports coverage until things start returning to normal.

This move also lets our sports staff help with work related to covering the coronavirus and its impact on the state.

On Wednesday through Saturday, you will find sports coverage in either the main section of the paper or the next section, which will be labeled AA. We will continue to have a sports section on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, but it will be smaller than usual.

Thank you for understanding and for supporting our work to inform our community about this public health threat and how Coloradans are affected. You make it possible.
— Lee Ann Colacioppo, editor

CHECKS TO PUBLIC?

Trump pushes for aid from Congress

By Lisa Mascaro and Zeke Miller
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON» In a massive federal effort Tuesday, President Donald Trump asked Congress to speed emergency checks to Americans, enlisted the military for MASH-like hospitals and implored ordinary people — particularly socially active millennials — to do their part by staying home to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Trump's proposed economic package alone could approach $1 trillion, a rescue initiative not seen since the Great Recession. He wants checks sent to the public within two weeks and is urging

AID » 20A

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